FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

I have just had the honor of being visited by the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Manpower and Personnel, the Honorable Carter Burgess; and the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Manpower and Reserve Forces, the Honorable Hugh M. Milton, II; together with members of their staffs. They met with me in my capacity as National President of the Reserve Officers Association. Colonel C. M. Boyer, Executive Director, ROA; Colonel J. M. Chambers, Assistant Executive Director; and others of our National Headquarters staff accompanied them.

The purpose of this meeting was to discuss the plans being developed by the Department of Defense to improve the Reserve structure of our country. I am greatly impressed by the thoroughness and completeness with which this problem has been studied, and am particularly pleased to know that some of the suggestions offered by the Reserve Officers Association have been of help to the Department of Defense, in arriving at their present position.

We have for some time been urging that realistic steps be taken to improve the Reserves of our country. It is our firm belief that the security of our country may well rely on those Reserves; if we are strong, it may well be that we may never have the war which usually comes only to the weak.

We will support the objectives and a great deal of the substance in the Department of Defense plan. There are certain areas in which the Association believes further changes need to be made before it can support the plan in detail. Our staff will continue
to work with the Department of Defense in endeavoring to solve these final problems.

In the last analysis, of course, the ultimate decision must rest with the Congress.

Strom Thurmond
National President
Reserve Officers Association